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Walking on Scilly

by Lawrence Upton

One can't be said to walk here as one can
of that setting free on the wide Cornish mainland.
There isn't room. A few steps and the rock

makes way for sea. Naturally, left to the self,
connection is by boat; and has been
since two islands became an archipelago,

garlic chopped and chopped again by wet knives;
or ground cover and its life on cleared land;
and we are as small arthropods, not sure

what's happening, unable to conceptualise
the forces cutting us up. And yet there's space.
I've dropped the mass production of affect!

I walk more slowly than I have yet done.
I spend more time upon my arse than's good
for the fatty heart; but I am observant

when I am stumbling forward, round the stones.
In lieu of space, I go through age layers
or think I do. Time's peculiar here

though many want to make it beg and roll.
It has its sacred gardens and passages
for which I am self-licensed and alert.

One goes out through many tangled eras,
ideas' overgrown achievements derelict,
into territory nowadays undimensioned.